

EDUCATIONAL VISITS

The school aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, enhanced wherever possible by educational visits and off-site activities. However, we realise the importance of careful planning and consideration of any factor that might put students at risk of harm or which might result in a member of staff or the public being put at risk. School employers should always take a common sense and proportionate approach, remembering that in schools, risk assessment and risk management are tools to children to undertake activities safely, and not prevent activities from taking place. This policy and associated procedure has been devised in order to minimise any such risk.

The following points should be considered prior to any visit:

- Educational visits should be planned as an integral part of the curriculum and suited to all ages, aptitudes and abilities of the students taking part.
- The leader of the visit should have first-hand knowledge of the places to be visited. Where an adventurous activity is to be taken or there are potential hazards, the School Leader will decide if the party leader should make a preliminary visit assessing the risks that may be involved.
- No commitments should be entered into, or non-returnable deposits paid, unless the remit falls within the direct delegated responsibility of the person making the decision and the budget that has been agreed by Finance department or Trustees.

There are 2 categories of educational visits:

- Day visits not involving risks or adventurous activities
- Those involving adventurous activities.

Parental consent should be obtained and parents should be given details of the visits, including costs (if any) well in advance. Details should include:

- Dates and times of travel and return
- Travel and contact arrangements
- Names of leaders and accompanying personnel
- The cost (if applicable)
- Insurance arrangements
- Lunch money arrangements
- Clothing arrangements
- Types of activity to be undertaken
- Code of conduct for standards of behaviour
- Emergency procedures
- Travelling arrangements

Senior leadership should check the suitability of dates and staff notified during briefing of a planned visit, to avoid clashes. Completed forms detailing the consent of parents and other details should be given to the School Leader.

HEALTH AND SAFETY OF STUDENTS ON EDUCATIONAL VISITS

Risk assessments would normally be carried out by the group leader and an assessment should be completed well before the visit.

The **risk assessment** need not be complex but should be based on the following:

- What are the hazards?
- Who might be affected by them?
- What safety measures need to be in place to reduce the risks to an acceptable level?
- Can the group leader put the safety measures in place?
- What steps will be taken in an emergency.

The group leader should take the following factors into consideration when assessing the risk:

- the type of visit/activity and the level at which it is being undertaken;
- the location, routes and modes of transport;
- the competence, experience and qualifications of supervisory staff;
- the ratios of teachers and supervisory staff to students;
- the group members' age, competence, fitness and temperament and the suitability of the activity;
- the special educational or medical needs of students;
- the quality and suitability of available equipment;
- seasonal conditions, weather and timing;
- emergency procedures;
- how to cope when a student becomes unable or unwilling to continue;
- the need to monitor the risks throughout the visit.

Exploratory visit

The School Principal will decide if an exploratory visit should be made by any teacher who is to lead a group abroad, on a residential visit or who is to instruct or lead the group in an outdoor activity such as trekking in a location that is not familiar to them.

In other cases, the group leader should undertake an exploratory visit, wherever that is possible, to:

- ensure at first hand that the venue is suitable to meet the aims and objectives of the school visit;
- obtain names and addresses of other schools who have used the venue;
- obtain advice from the manager;
- assess potential areas and levels of risk;
- ensure that the venue can cater for the needs of the staff and students in the group;
- become familiar with the area before taking a group of young people there.

If in the last resort an exploratory visit is not feasible then the group leader will need to consider how to complete an adequate assessment of the risks. A minimum measure would be to obtain specific information by letter from the venue, from other schools who have recently visited it, and from local organisations such as tourist boards.

Annual Visits

Risk assessments should be made each year even if the same location is visited as some factors will change from year to year. The risks must be reassessed each time - even when the group leader stays the same.

Charging for Educational Visits

Whenever possible the cost of educational school visits will be met by the school and the money raised through the Fund Raising Committee to help cover costs. If the visit is of a recreational nature all students must earn the right to go.

Approval and Parental consent

Approval must be obtained from parents and carers for all educational and recreational visits.

First Aid

First aid should form part of the risk assessment and before undertaking any off-site activities the School Business Manager should assess what level of first aid might be needed. On any kind of visit the group leader should have a good working knowledge of first aid and ensure that an adequate first-aid box is taken. For adventurous activities, visits abroad or residential visits it is sensible for at least one of the group's teachers to be a fully-trained first-aider. All adults in the group should know how to contact the emergency services.

The minimum first-aid provision for a visit is:

- a suitably stocked first-aid box;
- a person appointed to be in charge of first-aid arrangements.

Other considerations when considering first-aid needs should include:

- the numbers in the group and the nature of the activity;
- the likely injuries and how effective first aid would be;
- the distance of the nearest hospital.

First aid should be available and accessible at all times and the following minimum contents should be included for travelling first-aid box where no special risk has been identified:

- a leaflet giving general advice on first aid;
- six individually wrapped sterile adhesive dressings;
- one large sterile un-medicated wound dressing approximately 18 cm x 18 cm;
- two triangular bandages;
- two safety pins;
- individually wrapped moist cleansing wipes;
- one pair of disposable gloves;
- a resuscitator (for hygienic mouth to mouth resuscitation)

All minibuses are required by law to carry a first aid kit.

Supervision

It is important to have a high enough ratio of adult supervisors to students for any visit. The factors to take into consideration include:

- sex, age and ability of group;
- students with special educational or medical needs;
- nature of activities;
- experience of adults in off-site supervision;
- duration and nature of the journey;
- type of any accommodation;
- competence of staff, both general and on specific activities;
- requirements of the organisation/location to be visited;
- competence and behaviour of students;
- first aid cover.

Group leaders should assess the risks and consider an appropriate safe supervision level for their particular group. There should be a minimum of one teacher in charge.

In addition to the teacher in charge, there should be enough supervisors to cope effectively with an emergency. When visits are to remote areas or involve hazardous activities, the risks may be greater and supervision levels should be set accordingly. The same consideration should be given to visits abroad or residential visits. Some non-residential visits with mixed groups will need a teacher from each sex.

Transport

When hiring coaches etc. the group leader should check that the company used has appropriate insurance.

Before agreement is given for any staff member to drive a minibus it will be necessary to check their entitlement to drive a minibus under their current licence.

The Trustees also require that:

- A journey planner should be completed for a return journey of 100 miles or more, and a copy left with the school.
- Frequent breaks should be taken and certainly no more than a 2-hour journey followed by a 30-minute break.
- The maximum time behind the wheel is 4 hours.
- Drivers travelling for 50 miles or more must be properly rested and DBS checked before commencing their journey.
- Minibuses should be staffed on the bases of two adults with control over students.
- Both adults should be licenced to drive on journeys of 100 miles or more. On shorter trips only one adult needs to be licenced to drive.
- The second adult should be seated within the body of the vehicle so that passengers can be clearly observed and controlled.
- All persons using the minibus should be seated and use their safety belts.
- The drivers should carry out all appropriate checks on the vehicle as they are responsible for its condition.
- Accident forms should be completed in case of accidents.

Staff members **MUST NOT** use their own car to carry students on school visits or vocational placements unless authorised by the School Principal.

Detailed guidance can be found in the DfE “Departmental advice on health and safety for schools” (10th February 2012).

Insurance

The school has employers’ liability and public liability insurance cover which would cover most school visits. However, the School Business Manager will ensure that adequate insurance arrangements are in place prior to any educational visits.

Review Date: September 2021